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5 May 1964

MEMORANDUM FOR THE FILE

Personnel 17

SUBJECT: Meeting with General Carter re Separation of Surplus Employees

1. On 5 May General Carter called a meeting of representatives of each Deputy Directorate and the Office of Personnel on the subject of separation of surplus employees which he had brought up at the Executive Committee Meeting on 4 May.

2. He felt very strongly that we must never have another "701 operation" and pointed out the progress that has been made toward better personnel management through centralized personnel records, more realistic Fitness Reports, and development of better supervisory practices. He felt that in the absence of malfeasance or culpability or a personal lack of interest in performance of duty, every employee -- in whom we have a considerable investment from the time he entered on duty -- should be able to find some suitable place in the Agency. He said that we don't want submarginal people, but emphasized that they've got to know they're submarginal. He noted that fewer than ten per cent of the 701 cases which he reviewed two years ago had had records indicating even minimal performance, much less unsuitable or submarginal performance. Supervisors have to build a strong record before any moves for downgrading or separation of an employee can be considered. In General Carter's opinion, surplus proceeding against any person is the "kiss of death" and should not be initiated except as a last resort. He admitted that to instill these views into all supervisors and to give them the courage to put the unpleasant facts on the record will be a long range program.

3. Mr. Kirkpatrick pointed out what he felt were the four steps which should be taken in dealing with the relocation of personnel:

a. Through honest Fitness Reports let the individual know that he is slipping and is considered to be doing an inadequate job.

b. If it is a question of dropping behind because of lack of education or other qualifications, try to provide the necessary ingredients through training and alert the employee to his deficiencies.

GROUP 1
Excluded from automatic
downgrading and
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c. When a component wants to divest itself of an employee, it should bring in the Office of Personnel before the individual is formally notified in order to explore the possibilities of relocation in the Agency.

d. If reassignment is impossible, notify General Carter. (As General Carter himself put it, "I'm the guy who has the authority and I'll get the blame, so I want to get into the act before the employee is involved and the whole matter is in an uproar.")

4. I think everyone present questioned the possibility of keeping any such actions from the knowledge of the employee concerned. I asked how we should handle a case where a new, perhaps more honest, supervisor finds a submarginal problem under his jurisdiction -- when should he move to have the individual relocated? General Carter replied that the record would have to show that the individual was submarginal and was aware of it. He remarked that it might take three years or so to properly document the case. The meeting ended with General Carter's statement, "I admit it's a problem and it will take a long time to get things the way I want them."



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